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Nequicquam Deus abscidit
Prudens Oceano dissociabili
Terras; si tamen impiæ
Non tangenda rates transiliunt vada. Hor.

God spread in vain the waste of ocean green
The white man and his destined prey between.

South America is now the only seat of war on the globe. Considering the cause for which the patriots are fighting, its similarity to that which inspired our fathers, and the want of other news to distract the attention, it is surprising that they do not excite more interest and call forth more sympathy. We take it however for granted, that most of our

readers do cast an enquiring eye towards the belligerents and are surprised at the paucity of intelligence from that quarter, and the apparent weakness of the measures of both parties.

The Policy of the Spanish government prevents strangers from acquiring a knowledge of the internal state of their provinces;- but it is has often excited our wonder, that notwithstanding their pride and jealousy, so little is generally understood of their domestic oeconomy.

We have in this number presented our readers with a few scraps, for they can scarcely be called any thing else, on this subject. They are compiled and sparingly gleaned from the notes of an officer who was engaged in the unsuccessful enterprise of Miranda;- which were carelessly taken, without order, and intended for the inspection of no other person than himself. They are moreover, not general;- being confined to the ancient city of Coro and La Villa del Coro which is about twelve miles from it;- both in the Caraccas. But the Caraccas have

been the scene of many of Bolivars adventures; and we shall only select such general observations as will probably apply to the rest of the country. We are not engaged in plain sailing here;- the scrawling hand and erasures of the officer, and the ravages of salt water make it no easy matter, to discover the connexion of one half of the sentences, independent of erasures and the common hieroglyphics of all note books

CLIMATE & SOIL

Beyond the mountains around the ancient city of Coro and on their sides, the soil is fertile and the climate delightful. Here you meet regularly cultivated plantations, the roads are lined with the Cocoa tree and flocks and herds are beheld in vast variety over an extended country. Nature here blossoms in eternal spring;- If you could forget the tyranny of rulers and be insensible to the oppressions of the government, this region clad in enduring verdure, furnishes every necessary and every luxury of life. Such is the genial temperature of the air, that the want of cloaths would not be felt, except in the morning and evening, when the breezes are cooler.

No cold and chilling blasts are experienced; No snow or hail or sleet descends in this part of the country. Nor is the heat excessive. The breezes are mild enough to to feed all the fevours of man and dry enough to set all the system in regular motion. The rains are heavy at times but are soon absorbed and dried up. Within the mountains, the plain encircling the city of Coro, is an uncultivated waste; it furnishes pasture for goats only and is covered with the prickly pear tree. This is the case on the road to Villa del Coro.

ANIMALS:

The inhabitants have very fine cows. goats in abundance; who are regularly led from and to their enclosures, in the morning and evening by a species of dog resembling a greyhound. Their poultry is the finest in the world. The sheep have lost their wool and are covered with a kind of hair, but are fat and extremely well tasted; Their singularity may be ascribed to the heat of the climate;- perhaps more rationally, to their association with the goats. The horses are small, beautiful and well calculated for military service. Mules

are principally employed in drawing carria=
=ges... Vast droves of black cattle pass through
this country to the eastward.

AGRICULTURE

The rich inhabitants of Coro have farms
in the country on which some of them have
ten thousand head of cattle and fifteen
hundred slaves. They live in the most splen=
=did style. So fertile is the country, that by
the possession of cattle, a few slaves and a
few bags of doubloons (for they do not count
them separately) every wish of luxury is
gratified.

MANUFACTURES

These are yet in their infancy. The nobility
delight in foreign luxuries; and there is little
encouragement for their domestic manufac=
=tures which are rude and in no progressive state
of improvement. This is owing to the retar=
=ded condition in which their mechanism is
at present. However, there is nominally the
same variety of mechanical employments
as among us, such as watchmaking &c. They
manufacture a great quantity of segars. The
principal employment of the fair sex is that

of twilling lace. Wool and fur hats are smuggled in; The pimento hat made of that grass is most worn and most comfortable for the season. They make here also a kind of aniseed spirit, cotton hammocks and other course cottons.

COMMERCE & TRADE

The nobility never engage in trade, as it would be disgraceful to the Castilian name. Their motto is "honore non vile labore." The trade at Coro is principally in hides, coffee, tobacco Brazilletto Pimento, dressed goat skins &c. Their corn, flour and gin are brought principally from Curacoa; and from the other islands in some measure. A considerable forced trade is [was] carried on by the Americans and English, with the Maracayto Indians in the gulph of Venezuela. These Indians by a Parthian mode of warfare, keep themselves entirely independent of the Spaniards. They give Brazilletto wood in exchange for rum and coarse Dutch goods. The Indian

boats have often much difficulty to undergo in escaping from the Spanish guarda-costas; which they sometimes beat off in action - Their Indians are great thieves - their living is absolute and [the Spaniards give them from one to two hundred thousand dollars a year, to keep peace with them]*

The imports of this country are generally luxuries - necessary articles are for the most found at home. The exportation of coin is not permitted; and it can only be carried out by being smuggled. The only money is gold and silver; its exchange in the different provinces is the most considerable branch of trade. There are no banks at Cro.

LAW & GOVERNMENT

None but Castilians are admitted into the offices of Government. The character of the Creoles is amiable; but they are not suffered to participate in the administration of any civil function, of any importance or influence in wards, cities or districts. The prominent features of government

* Quere?.

are oppression and intolerance. No person is permitted to make any settlement, though of a transitory nature, without permission from the executive authority; and if he be a protestant, he must conform to the rules and customs of the church.

In the succession to intestate cases when a man dies, the linen furniture and the perishable personal property, in fact all that belongs to his family, must be left in statu quo; every thing may be destroyed by want of care or waste; but the property is put under lock and key; and cannot be used till it is decided to whom it belongs the movements of justice are procrastinated far beyond the time in which suits are generally decided in this country.

The relative situation between master and servant is, that the latter has no remedy for any unjustifiable exertion of authority, except in cases of murder. And even then, if the master is rich, he can easily purchase a pardon. The one is the slave of government; the other the slave of his master.

The church is a secure asylum for

criminals of every description; and punish:
:ments are more frequent for offences against
the ecclesiastical than the civil establish:
:ment.

Literature is at its lowest ebb; the pea:
:sants are carefully instructed in the superst:
:tions of their religion, but are universally in a
most lamentable state of ignorance.

POPULATION, MANNERS &c.

The city of Coro contains 15000 inhabitants consisting of blacks, whites, mulattoes & Indians. No regular censers or returns are ever taken. The peasantry are sober. Their common drink is Tuffia or Aguardiente. They smoke segars immoderately and their principal delight appears to strangers, to consist in the use of Tobacco. Many of the lower class of fe:
:males indulge in this practice. The na:
:tives are of a middling stature, not inch:
:ned to corpulence and of a swarthy complexi:
:on. They are idle, lazy and generally cun:
:ning and insincere. Coro has not increased in population or the number of buildings for many years back. The women of this part of the country are more numerous in proportion to the men than they are in other parts of the world. The proportion of the

soldiery to the citizens is as one to a hundred. No person was ever known to die of want. Emigration is not frequent. They do not encourage any strangers, except merchants and doctors, to settle among them. The common people are not suffered to possess fire arms; They manœuvre with pieces of wood in the form of muskets; they have the appearance of being completely equipped, in vast numbers, when there are few martial implements of any description among them. The officers must be excepted from this description, who in general are well accoutred. Indians are employed in the service as well as negroes.

The city of Cusco is said to have been founded by Hernan Cortez; but from the Spanish Policy it is impossible to discover their particular history. This is said to have been also the first city founded in the western Continent. But no interesting antiquities are to be found here. Everything, indeed, has the appearance of age, but there are no records of their original settlement or of the gradual progress of their improvement. For them, they

refer you to St Leon, which is called the capital of the Caraccas. Three hundred and eighty years have passed away, but have left behind them no solemn and awe inspiring remembrances. There are no vestiges of antique grandeur; no temples to designate the spots where heroes fought and bled. The same dull round of going to church, playing cards and cock fighting has still continued among them. They speak with pride of former glory and of the achievements of Cortez, but no spark of former fire is elicited; they are absorbed in their own vortex of indolence, ignorance and superstition. All independent volition, not engulphed in the omnipotence of despotism, is led by the nose by some reverend Padre. They do not appear to have the energy to add a single pebble towards their buildings, a tree to their promenades, or an idea to their stock of information.*

The theory of M. de Montesquieu is here illustrated as forcibly as in the dominions of the Ottoman Porte. A man is buried away

* probably exaggerated a little.

by Alguazils and often heard of no more.

The peasants who dwell without farms employ themselves in any work they can find. They rais a few goats and sell milk & get together a few heads of black cattle. They go along the coast in launches and trade in fish, cocoa nuts and other fruit, but are never secure of their possesions. Very few are employed in Plantations, which are most generally supplied with negroes. The Indians also engage in a trifling trade of this nature. The lower orders are very temperate; no foreign liquors can be introduced, and those which are peculiar to the country are as void of any intoxicating qualities as water and are very agreeable to the taste. The peasants can live here in the midst of plenty at an [eighth]* part of the expence at which farmers live in the United States. Neither is their support precarious or confined to any particular seasons of the year. Labour is light; that which consists in the cultivation of the Sugar cane is the most severe. The Cocoa and Banana trees are a never failing source of nutriment; and

* quere?

food for the whole day can be gathered in two minutes. The dress of the peasant is a light cotton trowsers and shirt. This is sufficiently comfortable all the year round and they use no other apparel, except when going to church. They appear to be very well contented and haphy;- they celebrate the numerous holidays of the church, with much festivity;- and are not remarkable for constancy to the objects of their passions.

The ladies seem to enjoy themselves as much as any in the world. They are extremely fond of ornaments of which they usually possess a great abundance. They appear clad in silks, embroidered with gold wrought in every imaginable form. The pliability of their lovers and husbands* the universal respect paid to the fair sex, and the genial nature of the climate renders woman superior to man. She is independant in spirit and highly fashionable; and as inclinable to all that is agreeable and perhaps more so than our American girls.† The ladies ride much on horseback, and their housings and saddles

* quere - † verbatim from the MS.

are superb and of great value.

The women of the lower orders wear the mantilla, a long shawl of muslin or cambric covering the head and descending to the knees. They are in general short, clumsy, and not remarkably handsome in their countenances.

The ladies have much pride and are not to be approached without much reverence. The lover appears under the windows of his mistress and prefers his petition to the melodious strains of the soft guitar. The shutters open - and at the words "Mia Cara" the notes cease. The conversation is prolonged to a late hour; - and were it not for the confounded bars which prevent him, the enamoured youth would make good his entrance into the mansion to enjoy more of the lady's genial acquiescence*

MILITARY SPIRIT.

Duelling is not common. Neither the rich nor the poor will fight; - the former because they have so much to risque, in point of property - the latter, because they have nothing to risque in point of reputation. The militia is contemptible; During the

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* verbatim from the MS.

alarm excited by Miranda's expedition, the French officers who came over to command them, from Gaudaloupe, refused to do it — and returned; because they entertained such a contemptible opinion of this body.

The rich however affect to be exceedingly fond of military men; and will take no notice of merchants until they retire from trade; when they are glad enough to take them by the hand. A Mexican merchant who had been excluded from the society of the great, until engaged in amassing his fortune, retired from business, worth thirty millions of dollars, and married all his daughters to noblemen.

The foregoing notes we have decyphered from a large quarto of some dimensions. Probably our readers will think as we ourselves did, when we had finished that the result is not worth the trouble. The account has little novelty - it is partial in many of its descriptions as

it relates to local circumstances. It may be also partial in its spirit. Miranda and his followers were all infatuated.

But, alas! we have too much reason to believe, that in South America, "all but the spirit of man is divine!" Neither should we be too sanguine, in our visions of the emancipation of that country. The spirit of liberty may again wave her standard on the giant summit of Andes and the blast of her clarion again reverberate along the cloud capt steeps - but independent of present tyranny and superstition - of the future accidents of ambition and the contingencies of revolutionary collision - physical causes will still remain the same. A climate subdues both statesman and warrior; and a soil that yields almost spontaneously, must ever be trod by degenerate inhabitants. Without labour of the body, the mental energies flag and the spirit of glory sinks into slumber in the lap of indolence & ease.

S.